GITAGOBINDA IN ODISSI DANCE

A "Mahari" (devadasi) of the Jagannath Temple, Puri in Odisi dance pose demonstrating Sree Geeta-Govinda.

—ललित लवङ्गलता परिशीलन 'कोमल' मलय समीरे ।—



KABICHANDRA

Kali Charan Patnaik

NATYACHARYA

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am here to-day to speak a few words on "Sri Geeta Govind in Odisi dance". The listners are not the lay public but an elite of art lovers. I must therefore heartily thank the Sangeet Natak Akadami for having offered me such an opportunity.

Why and where to ?—

"भक्तो विचित्रैर्ललितैः कारितैर्वा स्वयं कृतः ।
गीतैर्वाद्यैश्च नृत्यैश्च श्रीकृष्णं परितोषयेत् ।।"

The quintessence of Indian philosophy as expressed in the above Sloka is to be found in the writings of the Oriya musicologist Raghunath Rath in his book "Natya Monorama" written in 1613 A.D.

Even prior to this nearly five hundred years ago in the first decade of the 12th Century the writings and the dramatic life of Mahakavi Jayadev is a living example of the theme just cited.

The great Sage and Savant Jayadev was an orthodox Baishnab. The creator of the Universe and all creation of the great Vishnu has left the marks of his experiments of creation by himself coming in as different incarnations in different ages. Different scriptures of Hindu faith give different nos. of these incarnations. Jayadev has accepted

the no. 10 as the No. of incarnations of Vishnu. He has however offered his life's devotion and love not in the form of a Sage's silent prayer, but as a Poet he has written a pen-picture of Srikrishna's devine life in sweet and lilting, simple and attractive music. In his own words it is Lalit-Komala-Kanta Padavali.

"गीतं पीन पयोधरा ममदना नारी, विचित्रा कथा ।
रम्यं हर्म्यतलं सुधांशुकिरण प्रोद्दीपिता यामिनी ॥
चित्तज्ञाः सुहृदः, सुताः सुमनसो, भक्ताः पुनः सेवकाः ।
शुद्धं गीतफलं कवित्वममलं संसारसाराः मताः ॥"
(नाट्य–मनोरमा)

The reason behind the name—

The name Gita Govinda is a beautiful combination of two words Gita & Govinda. Their common aliteration is on the sound "Ga".

"परमानन्द विवर्द्धनमभिमत फलदं वशीकरणम् ।
सकलजन चित्तहरणं विमुक्तिवीजं परं गीतम् ॥"
(माट्य मनोरमा)

The above is the classically accepted trait of good music.

The Savant Jayadev has depicted the Lila of his Lord God, Srikrishna in verse and music. By praying to Srikrishna through the medium of music the devotee is blessed with the piousness he would get by reciting Samaveda. This is the accepted view of the Hindu scripture.

"कृष्णं सन्तोषयेव्यस्तु सुगीतै मधुर स्वनैः ।
सामवेदफलं तस्य जायते नाऽत्र संशयः ॥"
(नाट्य–मनोरमा)

A question may arise—"Why is it that the Kavya written to please Srikrishna is named Gita Govinda ? Why was it not named Gita-Madhaba, Gita-Srikrishna, etc. ? Or else in the tradition of the Oriya poet's love for aliterations, the name of the book could have been Gita-Gopala. Then what is it that led the Great Poet to pick this particular name though Mohavishnu Srikrishna has innumerable names. When we try to analyse the name we find—

"गां विन्दति इति गोविन्दः" गोविन्दः गां वाचं विन्दति जानाति इति ।

The word गोविन्द is derived from the word गौ, One of its meaning is Saraswati i.e. Vani.

गीतं गां विन्दति इति, गीत सरस्वतीं जानाति इति गीतगोविन्दः श्रीकृष्णः, तम् अधिकृत्य यत् काव्यं लिखितं तत् गीतगोविन्दं काव्यविशेषणत्वात् नपुंसकत्वम् ।

Lyrical Poetry :—

In ordinary parlance Gita-Govinda has got all the traits of a Mahakavya i.e., Epic poetry. But Jayadev has deviated from the great Poets who flourished prior to him. He has introduced for the first time music and Tala into verse. This distinctive property has given his kavya such a brilliant lusture that the colour is still ever bright. That is why it has helped in making Gita-Govinda a Giti kabya. Prior to Jayadev Poets followed the method of using matra, vrutta and chanda etc. The Rasa-guru Jayadev is a poet who has created a school for his own poetry. By adding Raga and Tala to his verse he changed the ways of

the then poetry completely. That is why Gita-Govinda attracts the lay man and the scholars, the young and the old with equal magnetic force. It has been placed at the top of all beloved literatures of our land. Gita-Govinda is the first exposition of Giti kabya or lyrical poetry. Its subject matter has already been tinged with etherial colouration. That is why the soul of man with its own limitations is attracted to the Almighty—Gita Govinda is the link. The physical man is raised to the metaphysical plane through Rasa and Vaba.

Kavya-rasa

The whole Kavya is steeped in Sringar-rasa or passionate-love. Among all the rasas of Indian literature Sringar is called the Adi-rasa or the best rasa. Indian poets have as a rule accepted the dictum that without sringar no Kavya can be elevated to the place of immortality. That is why since long ages Sringar has been crowned with glory by all Indian literatures.

"शृङ्गं हि मन्मथोद्भेद स्तदागमन हेतुकः ।
उत्तम प्रकृति प्रायो रसः शृङ्गार इष्यते ॥" (रसशास्त्र)

Similarly while singing the praises of Sringar Dhwanyaloka says :—

"शृङ्गारी चेतकविः काव्ये जातं रसमयं जगत् ।
स एव चेद् शृङ्गारी सर्व्वं सरसतां व्रजेत् ॥"

Mahakavi Jayadev took recourse to a rather clever tactics. Intentionally he attributes the love and passions of a being of physical limitations into his hero and heroine knowing fully that being Gods they are above human-plane.

In his own language —

"स्वच्छन्दं व्रजसुन्दरीभिरभितः प्रत्यङ्गमालिङ्गितः ।
शृङ्गारः सखि मूर्तिमानिवमधौ मुग्धो हरि क्रीड़ति ।।"

Thus has this immortal poet served the nectar of sringar to the audience, the singer, or even the reader, and the magical haze of love embraces of his characters he has bound down the reader or the singer of his songs to his own charriot of fame.

Sammilan-Union

In the intellectual union of Radha and Krishna the physical union of lovers in ordinary daily life is very clearly reflected. The clever poet has composed very wonderful and catchy tunes for his songs. The result was that both young and old, even dumb animals became great addicts to his tunes. The inherrant Sringar rasa also played its part. Even the devotee couldn't be captured by its sweet and sonoric effect. That is why Jayadeva's padavali became a raging success. It was universally accepted throughout the length and breadth of the country.

In Geeta Govinda is also reflected the sacred union of Ganga Jamuna. The union between the colours blue and yellow is also to be seen in every line of this kavya. I shall be merely trying to give an example of one drop out of a vast wave. After the Dasavatara Geetika the great poet has sung.

"श्रित कमलाकुच मण्डल, धृत कुण्डल
कलित ललित वनमाल ।

× × ×

What is happening in this song ? When a torrent of lovable and sweet words steeped in Sringar rasa is drawing on the heart strings of the audience and is about to sweep him off his feet then suddenly is to be heared "जय जयदेव हरे". This sudden change of the sense brings back the music lover to his senses. The very moment when he was about to be laid astray the music lover or reader finds before him a heavenly halo radiating from the face of his Lord God. The poet is also overwhelmed with joy when he finds that his efforts to elevate man from this mundane world to the etheral planet of union with God the creator has been crowned with wonderful success. He has positively advanced the ordinary human being from the physical realm to the metaphysical plane.

Words fail to praise Jayadeva's success. Now, man, lost in the admiration of his creator's limitless beauty and unconceivable greatness begins to dance with joy and to sing spontaneously. This dancing and singing are but the expressions of his heart's desire. In this way has originated the Odisi dance and music—the mental image of the Oriya nation.

Prabandha

The great poet has written :—

"एतं करोति जयदेव कविः प्रबन्धम्"

"Basing on this, some scholars have opined that this Prabandha of Jayadeva is also the same as that expressed in classical Indian musicology. To express this in the words of Sangeeta Narayana

"एतेन शुद्ध गीतेन प्रबन्ध इत्युच्चते" Suddha geeta is the same as Prabandha Geeta. Again we know, "प्रबन्धावयवो धातुः स चतुर्द्धा प्रकीर्त्तितः" It means "Dhatu" is the "abayaba" or part of Prabandha Geeta. That is divided into four parts.

"उद्ग्राहः प्रथमोभागस्ततो मेलापकः स्मृतः ।
ध्रुवत्वाच्च ध्रुवः पश्चादाभोगस्त्वन्तिमो मतः ॥"

When we analyse the songs of Geeta Govinda we however don't find these. That is in Geeta Govinda are not to be found Udgrahaka, Melapaka, Dhruva and Abhoga.

Similarly in another view :—

"प्रबन्धस्य षड़ाङ्गानि स्वरस्तु विरुदं पदम् ।
तेनक पाटतालौ च स्वराः सरिगमादयः ॥"

(गीत प्रकाश)

The above six divisions of Prabandha Geeta are not to be found in the songs of G. G.

Because of these reasons we must opine that G. G. cannot be said to belong to Prabandha Geeta.

Here Jayadeva has used the word Prabandha in the sense Sandarva. (प्रबद्धते इति) प्र+बन्ध+घञ्च प्रत्यय निष्पन्न ।

The songs of G. G. belongs to the class of music known as Kshudra Geeta in Indian musicology. They belong to Chitrakala class of music.

The eminent musical opus of Geeta Prakash (16th Century) and in even many later writings many songs of G. G. have been cited as belonging to Chitrakala class.

According to Geeta Prakash

"न्यूनमात्रा ध्रुवेर्ज्ञेया अर्थादन्येषां सममात्रिका ।
लयं त्रिपदा चतुष्पदायावदष्टपदा चित्रकलायाः भेदाः ॥"

Other scholars are of the same view. Songs of Chitrakala class can be extended from two padas upto eight padas. The Dhrubapada is called "Ghosha" in Orissa. The author of Sangeeta Sarani opines this, "ध्रुवाः घोषाः इति उत्कलभाषायां प्रसिद्धाः ।" The number of letters in the Dhrubapada or Ghosa of a Chitrakala song will be less than that of the original.

We can also mention here that the nomenclature of Astapadi that has stuck to G. G. can not be proved according to the classical musicologists. The reason for such a statement is Chitrakala songs G. G. can not be called Astapadis. So also all the songs of G. G. are not Astapadis. We therefore conclude that the songs of G. G. belong to the Kshudra Geeta section and the Chitrakala class.

As these songs are extremely popular, so they can be said to be "Bhasa Geeti".

For instance Geeta Prakash states :—

भाषा गीतिः समाख्याता एषा गीत विचक्षणैः ।
यथा वै रंज्यते लोकस्तथा वै संप्रयुज्यते ॥

The songs of G. G. fits exactly into this class.

These again may be classified as belonging to 'Pruthula' class too.

The class of Pruthula must have the following :—

भूरि लघ्वाक्षरपदा पृथुला संमता सताम् ।

(सङ्गीत कल्पलता)

The songs of G. G. have been composed by combining innumerable words of "Laghu Matra".

In view of the aforesaid reasons in general and owing to the 'Nayaka-Nayika Veda, based on Sringar Rasa in particular, Geeta Govind is quite befitting for 'Lasya Nrutya', The Odisi dance belongs to the 'Lasya' class. So G. G. occupies a distinctive place in the Odisi dance.

Dedication

Geeta Govinda is placed in the first decade of the 12th century. The theme is singing the praises of the Lord through hymns, i.e. Leela Kirtan of Sreekrishna and Sri Radha. In this lyrical picture Srikrishna has ten incarnations. Krishna is no other than Maha Vishnu.

In different Vishnu temples of Orissa an image of quadruple-handed chaturbhuj Vishnu minus Sri Radha was being worshipped. The time of this worshipping is about the 11th century A.D. Manlike, double armed or an image of Srikrishna and Radhika in a pose of union—Jugal rupa was generally unknown.

In the year 1112 A. D. Andhra desha was within the Kalinga Empire. Utkal and Andhra were very close to each other in cultural and intellectual affinities. So it was quite natural that in both these countries the influence of the Sakti-cult as propagated by the renowned savant Nimbark was very deep and wide. It was the great sage

Nimbark who first initiated the cult of worshipping Sakti in the form of Sri Radhika. Jayadeva was initiated into this Radhabad, either by Nimbark himself or else through some of his followers. That is how Jayadev came to write the G. G.—a Saga of Sri Krishna and Radhikas' 'Lila'.

To quote his own words—

"श्री वासुदेव रतिकेलि कथा समेत
मेतं करोति जयदेव कविः प्रबन्धम् ॥

The famous Jagannath temple of Srikshetra, Puri was built within 1112 to 1147 A.D. during the reign of Maharaja Chodaganga Deva. Though it is popularly called the Jagannathdham yet in actual practice it is a Saktipitha. The food offerings to Lord Jagannath that is piously accepted as Mahaprasad or Lord's own food by the whole Hindu world becomes "mahaprasad" only after it has been reoffered to Vimala Devi.

Lord Jagannath is no other than all powerful "Satgunanwita", devine power Bhagaban Vasudeva Srikrishna. Similarly the diety Vimala is creator's female insignia, i.e. Sakti and her other images are Lakshmi and Sri Radha.

Sakti and Saktiman are the one and the same force, but they have bifurcated willfully so as to propagate God's creation. This is the will or desire of Lord Vasudeva. Creation through the union of love is Vasudev tatwa.

The great devotee began singing his hymns every day at the feet of the Lord of the Universe—Jagatnath—who again is none thero than Srikrishna.

Along with the soulful singing of the devotee Jayadeva, his hymns of G. G. were rendered into unique dance recitals by none other than Soubhagyabati Padmavati, who was dedicated to Lord Jagannath as a Sevadasi. This unforeseen duet can scarsely be imagined. A most attractive voice, rendered still more captivating because of his heart's overflowing devotion combined with sweet tikling dancing bells of the bewitching beauty. This rare fare filled the spacious Garbha-griha of Sri Mandir.

The thousands of eyes of the crowd of devotees of the Jagannath temple could not but overflow with glad-tears at this sight of sights. Their immediate impression was—has the Natamandap of Lord Jagannath been transformed into the venus of Vasanta rasa of Vrindavan !

Their emotion-choked voices rang out saying—
साधु, साधु, पद्मावती चरण चारण चक्रवर्त्ति ।

First appointment in Srimandir

The sweet and captivating music—कोमलकान्त पदावली of G. G. was echoed in the voices of the thousands of devotees from far and near who flocked to have a Darsan of Lord Jagannath.

At about 1279 to 1307 A.D. the Emperor of Utkal was Narasingha Deva II, also known as Kavi

Narasingha Deva. The renowned scholar and poet Kaviraj Narayan Das was the court poet of this king who was a great patron of literature and arts. Kaviraj Narayana Das brought it to the notice of the Emperor that G. G. was an opous that had created a place for itself in the heart of the thronging multitudes. Thus through the efforts of this Kaviraja, readings from G. G. were hence forward accepted as a daily ritual in Srimandir. The popular emperer Narasingha Deva was thus the creator of this tradition. Every day at Bada-singhar puja singing some of the G. G. songs became a Niti (rule). Thus in Jagannath Pitha, Orissa and for the first time "भाव शृङ्गार–सारस्वतमिह जयदेवस्य विश्वग्वचांसि" G. G. was honoured by the Emperor and the people as sacred scripture.

Religion follows the Ruler

Prior to the 12th century A.D. चतुर्भुज विष्णु images were being worshipped in the temples of Orissa. This tradition had its roots in the great popularity of "Bghagabat Tattwa". No where were to be seen the single image of Sri Radha or even the united image of Radha and Krishna. It was only after the surging popularity of G. G. that throughout the length and breadth of Utkal two new dieties took their place in the hearts of the multitude. These dieties were Srikrishna in one of these forms, such as Dwibhuja, Tribhanga, Venudhara, Natabara, Rasaraja or Srikrishna and Sri Radhika in a Jugal pose.

Gradually people became used and accepted this new idea that without Sri Radhika the worshipping of Sri Krishna too was not possible. It was rather irreligious. Along with this the daily readings from G. G. as a scripture in all temples of the land was very gladly accepted as a ritual, by the general mass.

During this century were built innumerable temples, in which were to be seen these following types of images :—

Tribhanga thama Srikrishna, the Hallisaka Rasa dance of Gopanganas, Muralidhari Srikrishna surrounded by a group of Gopis. This surging change in the form of worship of the people of the land of Utkal can only be directly traced to the all-engulfing influence and popularity of G. G. and Jayadeva.

The evergreen influence of this great work can be very well linked to so many other facts. Henceforward in practically all hamlets of Utkal every evening G. G. songs were sung by pious devotees in the village Bhagavata Ghara. It was sung and read; by the well-read and the illiterate public, as if they knew no other scripture. Gradually G. G. was copied in endless numbers on palm leaf Pothis and every rural Bhagavata Gadi had atleast one copy. These palm leaf scriptures were worshipped with complete rituals of Dhupa, Dipa, Chandan and Puspa. Even to-day, this time-honoured tradition has not died out.

Royal acceptance

The tidal wave like onsurge of Geeta Govinda into the life and existence of both the ruler and the ruled was not uni-track. Beginning with a revolutionary change in the traditional Sanskrit literature step by step it blossomed into so many shapes and forms—Changing of the old Bhagabata accepted Chaturbhuja God Vishnu and the installation of Radhakrishna Rasa-bad in its place—preaching of the great emotion-packed theism of Rasaraja through the medium of Sringar-Rasa—ringing hymns in the praise of God—a form of worship through sweet and captivating music—daily readings from Geeta Govinda in the Jagannath temple.—as a result of this neither the scholar nor the illiterate could withhold himself from drinking deeply the nectar of Geeta Govinda.

The first "Tika" or annotation of G. G. was written by Acharya Udayan. Though it was Kaviraj Narayana Das who first had G. G. installed as a sacred scripture of Sri Mandir through the then Emperor Narasingha Dev yet he did not rest content with that. It was he again who composed another Sanskrit annotation which he named Sarbanga Sundari. This creation has been placed in the period 1279 to 1307 A. D. by scholars. It is surely the oldest annotation of Geeta Govinda. It has got its own distinctive traits and excellence. I am very sorry to state that even Indian Scholars are rarely aware of its existence and so have not been able to

give it its due. Probably some of you who are present here will be glad to note that I have been able to collect two palm leaves pothis of Sarbanga-sundari Tika. After Narayana Das so many other scholars and poets followed in his footsteps.

Geeta Govinda gradually became an unending source of all that was sweet in life and even in devine life after death. Like a procession of honey-mad bees people began copying, adapting and stealing the bhavas of Geeta Govind. Thus, we see that the poet king Gajapati Purusottam himself came forward to compose another Kavya which he named "Abhinaba Geeta Govinda". The name itself indicates what this new Kavya was.

The Rajakavi also tried to get his own writing to become a ritualistic scripture just as Geeta Govind had then become. But neither the scholars nor the lay public were agreeable to accept it as a scripture or as hymns. A popular story is still in vogue that even the diety Lord Jagannath showed His displeasure at this attempt of Rajakavi Purusottam Deva.

Later on the pious poet Ray Ramananda Pattanayak also came forward to join those who followed in the footsteps of Jayadeva. He wrote a drama which he named "Jagannath Ballava". Ray Ramananda, the traditions say, himself instructed the temple danceuse—Devadasis in the various dances of his play when it was staged. The text of this play states that the then Emperor of Utkal Gajapati Purusottam Dev was the author.

But this has been done according to the then tradition as is well-known to Indian scholars. Mahakavi Jayadeva through his G. G. thus initiated new school of writing.

I am giving a quotation from Ray Ramananda's Jagannath Ballav Natak—

"कलयति नयनं दिशि दिशि वलितम्
पङ्कजमिव मृदु-मारुत–चलितम् ।
केलिसदनं प्रविशति राधा
प्रतिपद समुदित–मनसिज वाधा ।।
जनयतु रुद्र गजेश मुदितम्
रामानन्द राय कवि गदितम् ।।"

Thus with the royal dictation behind it Geeta Govinda's popularity now swept throughout the length and breadth of the land. It is to be heard in Vishnu temples of Utkal and also presented along with Odisi dance as a "Niti."

The Gajapati King even gave away land to the Devadasis, so that they could perform their dance before the diety without any worldly hindrance. Thus, Odisi dance through the ages has been kept alive at the Jagannath temple through the medium of G. G. hymns.

Gajapati Prataprudra Deva once again reiterated the then accepted ritual and in a stone eddict has left his own acceptance of G. G. Jagannath Temple rituals. This stone eddict of P. Deva can still be seen in this temple at Puri. It is dated 1507 A.D.

Exposition and Expansion

We have already stated how from one single centre popularity and expansion of Geeta Govinda went on and on, it never would stop. From one Srimandir it spread like wild fire to all Vishnu temples of the land. So also following in the foot steps of the Mahari (devadasi) dance in vogue in this central temple other temples followed suit. Probably because women devadasi dancers were not to be had in all temples, so young boys dressed like women danced with the same types of ornaments, hair style and floral decorations etc. took up the cult of spreading Odisi dance style of the original Geeta Govinda.

In social and non-religious functions dancing by devadasis was forbidden by tradition. But the G. G. types of songs and the accompanying Odisi dance was so much in demand that this womenly garbed young boys' dance became a popularly accepted institution. Gradually even in temples this dance by womenly garbed boys became an accepted form.

These boys dressed like women danseuse came to be known as 'Gotipua' or 'Akhada-pila'. The tradition of the Odisi dance which has now become many centuries in age, has been kept alive and has been extensively popularised by these 'Gotipuas'.

When we look back into history we can surely say that the Vishnu temples of Orissa were the main

centres of propagation of G. G. hymns and Odisi dance that went along with it.

Odisi Dance and Geeta Govinda

Odisi dance is a form of Lasya dance. There is a well accepted Sanskrit Saying—"लास्यं तु सुकुमाराङ्ग मकरध्वज वर्द्धनम्" In Nrutyavinaya—"आङ्गिको वाचिकश्चैव आहार्यः सात्विकस्तथा ।" These four divisions are always used in Odisi dance.

Vacchika—is the song portion
Angika—is Abhinaya or play acting
Aharya—is dressing in garbs and ornaments, fitting the part that the danseuse is playing.
Satwika—is the part in which Bhavabhinya or expression of the underlying sense takes place.

Singing must always accompany Odisi dance. This is a must.

While speaking on this issue another great musicologist Jadunath Raysinha—himself a king of Tunga dynasty of Ex-State Tigiria (Orissa) in his book Abhinaya Darpan Prakash opines :—

"गेयादुत्तिष्ठते वाद्यं वाद्यादुत्तिष्ठते लयः ।
लयताल समारब्धं ततो नृत्यं प्रवर्त्तते ।।"

That is why it is accepted that without appropriate songs Odisi dance cannot be performed.

Another important Oriya book on music Abhinaya Chandrika written by Maheswar Mohapatra says—

"काव्य वाक्यादि बन्धेन मुद्राद्दृष्ट्यादि चालनं ।
प्रदर्शनं इति मुख्या उद्वेदयेति शोभनम् ।।"

"So we see that Odisi dance has always laid great stress on Bhava-Vinyas or expression of the theme through the dance and a play acting. It is an accepted opinion that—

मागधं भावमुख्यं च सुरसेनाङ्ग चालने
कर्णाट सर्व रूपेण केरलं लास्यमुत्तमे ।
युग्म नृत्यरता गौड़ी पञ्चनद्याङ्ग नर्त्तने
भावप्रदर्शने उड्र स्यात अत्र न संशयः ॥

The principal 'Bhangi' or pose of Odisi dance is known as "Tribhangi" or the Natabar Bhangi. In this bhangi the danseuse imitates the "Tribangima' thani of Sri Krishna. So also some other distinctive 'Thanis' help us to classify the unique qualities of Odisi dance.

In Odisi dance the "Mardala" is the usual accompanying Tal instrument. Though in Odisi music Navatalas are used, only those talas that are befitting the lasya style are used in Odisi dance. These talas are "Rupak, Ek-tali, Aditala, Triputa and Jhampa, etc. Atha tali is very much in use in Odisi dance. Though this tala is "Sapta matrika" yet at the beginning of the tala count a "praswna or a Jhunk" distinguishes this tala from other saptamatrika talas. Apart from aditala, Jhula (Trimatrik) and Pahapata (Chaturmatrik) are two other distinctive talas that are very much in use with Odisi dance. Ordinarily these talas are used in "Drutalaya". For the proper exposition of Bhava in lasya dance Sringar is the most fitting rasa. Its 'Vrutti' is 'Kaishiki'.

"या श्लक्ष्ण नेपथ्य विचित्र चित्रा स्त्री संकुला पुष्कल नृत्यगीत ।
कामोपभोग प्रभवोपचारान् स्यात् कैशिकी चारुविलासयुक्ता ।।"
(सङ्गीत नारायण)

The Vrutti of Odisi dance is Kaisiki as this is a dance full of Lasya. All its four Angas are according to the Kaisiki Vrutti.

Geeta Govinda is a Geeti-natya or dance drama in which the Rasalila of Sri Krishna and Radhika are portrayed. The hymn or songs of Geeta Govinda are most befitting because the portrayal of the Bhagabat lila by mortals is possible only when the mind of the audience is prepared to accept this fictionalisation. That is why right from the King down to the layman all have accepted this as a sacred scripture. As a whole Geeta Govinda takes the help of Bhakti, Bhava, Swara, and tala to reach the audience. That is the reason why it is so wide spread and popular. The songs of Geeta Govinda are very apt for the propagation of Satwika Bhava. So also Odisi dance and Geeta Govinda songs are extremely akin to each other.

The land of Jagannath—Utkal is a great Vaishnava Pitha. Here the Oriya child is taught his alphabets too by lisping the name of Sri Krishna. Practically in every village there is either a Radha-krishna or a Gopinath temple. That is the prime reason why even after about a million every Oriya sheds torrents of emotional tears while singing G. G. hymns. They look to their dear diety through the medium of Swara-rasas and bhavas to be had in Geeta Govinda.

Raga and Tala

There are so many editions of Geeta Govinda. Mostly all of them agree regarding which song is to be sung in what Raga and in what Tala. Only a few differ at some places. The number of Ragas are eleven such as Malaba, Gujjari, Vasant, Baradi, Desa Baradi, Ramkeri, Gundakiri, Deshakshya, Karnat, Vibhasa, Bhairabi etc. Regarding Talas Rupaka, Ektali, Jati, Astatala have been mentioned in the book. Astatala or Athatali is extremely popular in Orissa.

At the time when Geeta Govinda was written the system of Swaralipi (notation) was unknown. These ragas have come down from one singer to another and that is how people have been singing them. In the absence of any definite Raga notation, changes have crept in. These changes were mainly due to change of time and taste of the people and musicians. In Natya shastra there is a saying—"आवन्ती दाक्षिणात्या च पाञ्चाली चोड्रमागधी".

According to this tradition difference of racial or original tastes have also come in to the mode of singing. This is but natural. Therefore some difference in the Raga and Tala have occurred.

We cannot say that the songs of Geeta Govinda are being sung in Orissa strictly following Raga Tala instructions given in the printed book. In some cases the present existing mode of singing has been influenced by Odisi traditions and forms.

The Ragas and Talas used in the singing of G. G. as is found today in Orissa has got a long tradition behind it. Though the ragas and talas used in Orissa differ from the ragas mentioned in printed books yet they are fitting to the Bhava and Rasa of the songs.

It has already been stated that the songs of G.G. being of Sringara Rasa and Kaisiki Vrutti they are very fitting to the Lashya form of dance.

Every evening in every Vishnu temple of Orissa a regular feature of Sandhya-Arati is the singing of the first song of Geeta Govinda—Dasabatara stuti. This song raises man from the mundane every day world to the realm of devine bliss. In some temples this is Dasavatara Song is accompanied with Orissi Dance.

When we look to the Raga in the singing of Dasavatara song we find that the tradition of Odissi musicologist is strictly followed. These instructions say—आदौ मालव पञ्चम....आदि etc. and that is in Raga used for the Dasavatara Song.

According to the musical authority Geeta Prakash the Lakshyana of Malaba Raga is as follows :—

टङ्कान्वय समुद्भूतो मालवोऽपि रिपोज्झिता
निषादांश ग्रहन्यास गभूरि: सधकम्पित: ।
वीर शृगारयोर्गेये दिनान्ते निशि वा बुधै: ॥

According to thə Odisan School of music Malaba Raga belongs to Gouri Mela. In this Mela Rusav, Dhaibata Swaras are komala Vadi—

Nisada, Sambadi, Gandhara—Re and pa are Barjita. Therefore it is an Odaba Raga. There is excessive use of Gandhara. Sadja and Dhaibata Swaras are Kampita. Rasa—Bira and Sringara, Time evening (Pradosh) or night.

Aroha— Sa Ga Ma Dha Ni Sa
Avaroha—Sa Ni Dha Ma Ga Sa

The Key to Its Popularity

Geeta Govinda is essentially a Geeti Kavya—over and above the dramatic subject matter is stepped in Sringara combined with Bhakti or devotional Rasa. In more recent years the person who was most successful in popularising the Geeta Govinda school of verse and music was the late Pindika Srichandana. He flourished about 300 years ago. His wonderful translation of Jayadev's unique gem is named Vasant Rasa. Srichandana's rendering of Geeta Govinda called Vasanta Rasa became so popular that it has been performed as a stage show more as a devotional offering than as a dramatic performance. I will briefly sketch a staging of Vasanta Rasa. The full moon fortnight of the month of Chaitra—the village mandapa or stage is decorated with fullest devotion with flowers, folliage and so forth. The dramatic personages are Ashta Sakhis, Radha and Krishna. All the artistes are young boys suitably garbed. The songs are sung in proper Ragas and they are accompanied by dance in proper Talas. All the departments of this staging of Vasanta Rasa i.e. music, dance, play-acting is according

to the Odisi style. These rural shows have greatly helped in the popularising and keeping ever green the spirit of G. G. throughout the length and breadth of Orissa. The group of boys in danse-use garb known as Gottipua group generally sing the Dasavatara Geetika at the beginning of the stage show.

I myself have trained such a group of young boys and have performed Geeta Govinda for atleast 500 nights in different parts of Orissa. I had to compose Oriya translation of G. G. strictly following its Swara and Chhanda. These shows were extremely popular and even today after long years many people pine for them. My own drama Geeta Govinda which is a dance Drama is even today being performed by various amature groups throughout the State. Thus we see that at different ages different authors have tried their hand at popularising Geeta Govinda. I must however state that the Vasanta Rasa of Pindika Srichandan contributed the most in keeping Geeta Govinda ever green in the minds of the millions of rural Utkal.

GEETA GOVINDA TO THE MEDIUM OF ODISI SANGEETA & DANCE

Most of the songs of the Geeta Govinda are now-a-days used in the Odisi Dance performances. It is not possible within this limited sphere to give a detailed analysis of all the songs. I am trying to place before this art-loving audience only a few of

the songs of Geeta Govinda that are very popular in Orissa.

Geeta Govinda— Seventh sarga —Shodasa Sandarbha—let us look to Ragas and Talas following Bhavas and Rasa. Sri Radha is very anxiously waiting for her Nagar (Lover Sri Krishna) The appointed time was long passed. Her Sakhi (Lalita) was sent by her to try and find out where-abouts of Sri Krishna. The Sakhi comes back without any trace of Krishna and reports it to Smt. To quote the words of Jayadev, Smt. says :—

अनिल तरल कुवलय नयने ....
तपति न सा किसलय शयनेन सखी, या रमिता बनमालिना" इत्यादि

Here instead of getting angry with शठ एवं धृष्ट नायक Smt. is pleading with the Sakhi not to be agrieved. She says, her heart is completely engulfed by the good qualities of Sri Krishna. Even if due to Sri Krishna's false behaviour she is very pained that her heart is torn as under. Then in that case she will surely be able to be united with her Nayak very soon.

But according to Odisi tradition this song is sung in Raga Kalyani, Tala—Ektali. When it is accompanied by Odisi—dance then also the same music is used.

This song belongs to Kalyani Mela. Madhyam swara is Tivra, the other swaras are sudhha. Vadi—Ga; Samvadi—Dha or Ni. Matantare Vadi—Re and Samvadi—Pa. It is a Purbanga Raga. As in

Aroha—Madhyam and Nisad are left out, so it is Odaba. In Abaroha—It is sampurna. मतान्तरे सम्पूर्ण—संपूर्ण ।

Aroha—Sa; Re; Ga; Pa; Dha; Sa.
Abaroha—Sa; Ni; Dha; Pa; Ma; Ga; Re; Sa.
Time—First quarter of the night
Rasa—Karuna and Sringara.

Many more songs are also used along with Odisi dance when performances are given. In some cases these songs also do not follow Raga—Tala as indicated in printed books. They follow the traditional Raga—Tala or style to be more in consonance with Rasa and Bhava. Among them we shall present a few with the accompaniment of Odisi dance.

The theme of the Geeta Govinda is Basanta Rasa. The first song begins Raga Basanta Tala—Rupaka as found in printed books.

In Orissa the same song is sung in Raga—Basanta and Tala—Atha Tali and later on Ektali. This is the Odisi tradition. The song is ललित लवङ्गलता परिशीलन...

According to Geeta Prakash the lakshana of this Raga.

"षड़्ज मध्यमिकाज्जातो षड़्ज न्यास ग्रहांशकः ।
गेयो वसन्तरागोऽयं वसन्त समये बुधैः ॥

According to the Odisi School of music Raga—Basanta belongs to Panchama Mela. But in it the use of two Madhyamas are not admitted.

Sudha Madhyama and Rusava Komala are used.

Vadi—Ma (Sudha)
Sambadhi—Sa
Jati—Odaba—Sadaba
Rasa—Madhura—Santa—Sringara
Time—All time in Basanta, specially in the evening —moonlight nights.

Aroha—Sa, Ga, Ma, Dha, Ni, Sa,
Abaroha—Sa, Ni, Dha, Ma, Ga, Re, Sa
Panchama is barjita Swara.

We are presenting another song with Odisi dance. The eleventh song of the 5th sarga of G. G.

In this song the Sakhi (Lalita) is pleading with Sm. Radha, who is "Birahotkanthita Naika" to go in aviation without any more delay. The song is रतिसुखसारे......

This song is of Raga Gujjari Tala Ektali as per printed books. But in Odisi style it is sung in Raga Kalyana Tala Ektali.

The other song to be demonstrated with Odisi dance is twelfth song of sixth Sarga G. G.

Sakhi Lalita is describing the mental state of Sm. to Srikrishna. The Naika Srimati is Basaka Sajjika.

The song is—
"पश्यति दिशि दिशि......"etc.

This song is sung in Khamacha or Khambaja Tala—Asta tali or Atha Tali.

Raga—lakhana Utkala Padhati

In Utkala Padhati it belongs to Sreemela

Vadi	Ga
Samvadi	Dha
Jati	Sadaba—Sampurna
Time	Second quarter of night
Rasa	Karuna—Sringara
Aroha	Sudha Ni
Abaroha	Komala Ni is used
Aroha	Sa, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa
Abroha	Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ga, Re, Sa

Lastly, I frankly admit that, I can not check my enthusiasm regarding one more song from G. G. My enlightened audience will presently find out the reason.

In Orissa there is a traditional story in which the creator and his spouse have been depicted to be suffering from the same malady as mortal man—Lord Jagannath and Mahalakshmi are in the midst of a Dampatya-Kalaha.

The story begins thus—The car festival of Lord Jagannath of Puri in the month of Ashadha is a famous festival of the Hindu-world. The three dieties Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra go to Gundicha-mandir. They go there seated in three separate chariots or Rathas. As depicted in the puranas Subhadra is the sister of Lord Jagannath. In this story the wife of Jagannath—Maha Lakshmi has been painted as an exact replica of an ordinary mortal wife.

According to the story—Maha Lakshmi flies to a rage as instead of her rightful claims as a wife, her sister-in-law Subhadra has accompanied Jagannath in this trip. So in the absence of the Lord she closes the doors of the temple. When Lord Jagannath returns from the Gundicha temple, Maha Lakshmi does not open the door. At this juncture the devotees of Jagannath step in. On their behalf the Mahari (devadasis) come and plead the case of the Lord before Maha Lakshmi. The maharis plead their case by singing a song of Mana-Bhanjan from the immortal poet Jayadeva's G. G.

This occasion is termed as "Kabata-pheda', i.e. opening of the doors.

The setting and the timing of this song are very remarkable. The whole world is calm and silent as it is the last part of the night and all are asleep. Just then the maharis sing this extremely popular song in the huge "Garbhagriha" of the gigantic Srimandir. Excepting for the singing all else is calm and silent. The impact of the song is very very effective. The devotees who have patiently kept themselves awake for this rare feature are unable to check themselves any longer. Nearly all give a free sway to their emotions which are expressed by torrential tears.

Now I will ask a question to those of my audience who are interested in the science of psychology. May I ask them to compare notes and find out why

this particular song had this wonderful impact on a mass of devotees. My reading is, the Bhava, Rasa, and Kala (Time) of this song strictly according to the Raga and tala of our music shastras as presented in Odisi style have again been proved perfectly correct.

Bhaktakabi Jayadev has used this particular song as Srikrishna's attempt at Manbhanjana of Srimati who is in a spell of Gurumana. In the precincts of the Jagannath temple in exactly similar emotional circumstances Jayadeva's study of human emotions is proved cent per cent correct.

The Raga of this song is Desabaradi and the tala is Astatali—as per the G. G. granthas we usually find. But according to the traditions of Oriya singing the song is sung in Raga-Paraja and the tala is Jhampa. It is presented in typical Odisi style. This song is also presented with Odisi dance.

The Raga lakshana of Paraja is noted herewith.

It belongs to Baradi mela in Odisi school. Risabha and Dhaibata Swaras are Komal, Vadi—Sadaja, Samvadi—Panchama. It is a Uttaranga raga.

According to Swarabasthan and Sritibichara of komal Re and komal Dha the Rasa is Dasya, Madhura and Shanta. Aroha and Abaroha—Sampurna Time—last quarter of night.

The song is वदसि यदि किञ्चिदपि....

I shall not bid farewell from you—instead I will crave your indulgence to keep the spirit of the Mahakavi Jayadeva burning ever bright in your inner-most souls. Echoing the famous saying of Indian philosophy that Bhakta is greater than Bhagaban, Jayadeva—who was the paramabhakta of Jagannath is no less than Jagannath to me. I therefore pray that the spirit of Jayadeva lives on for ever.

Along with the presentation of the song वदसि यदि..............—by our renowned singer Sri Balakrishna Das I shall finish my speech.

जय जगन्नाथ

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